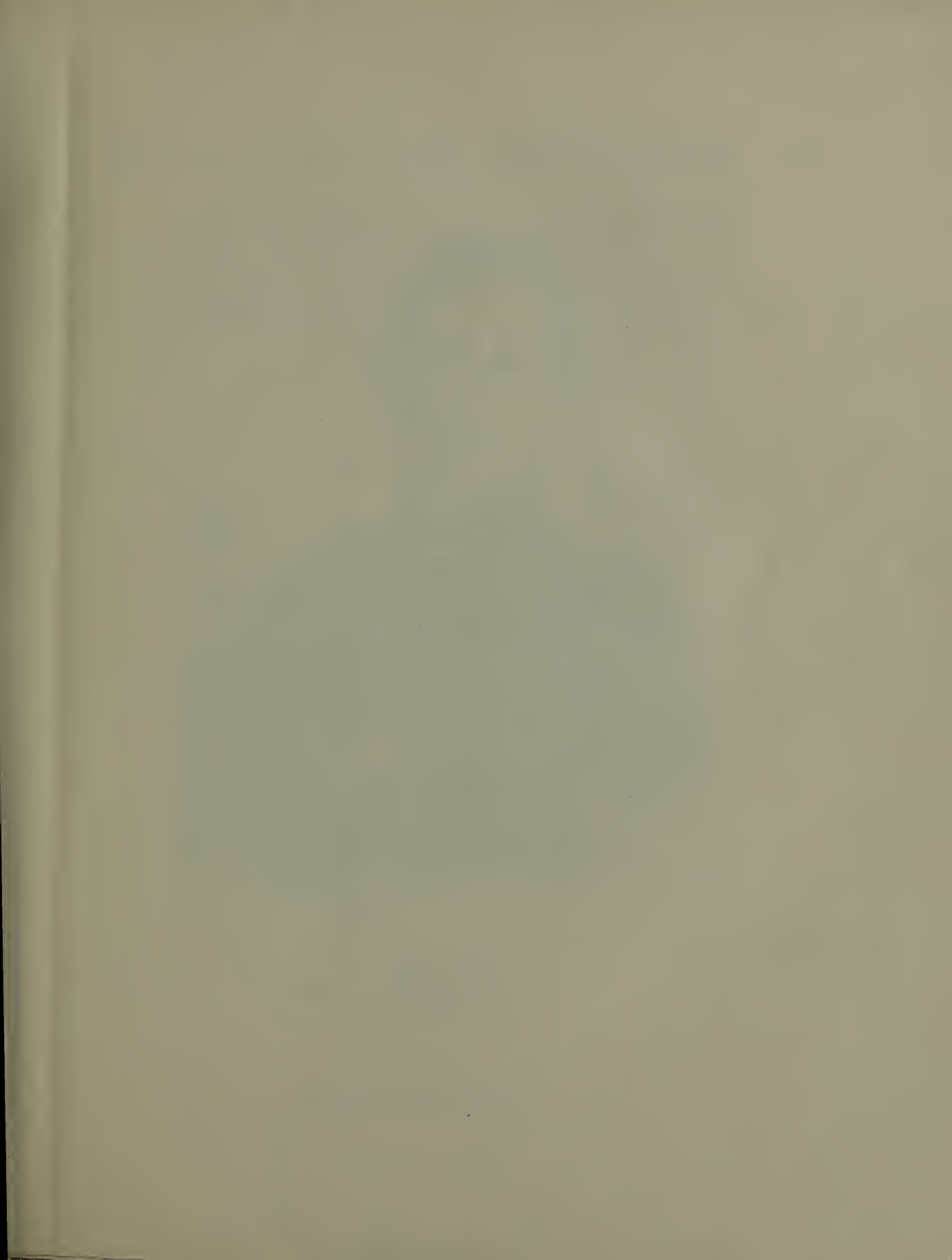


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Elizabeth Moore

ELIZABETH NOURSE

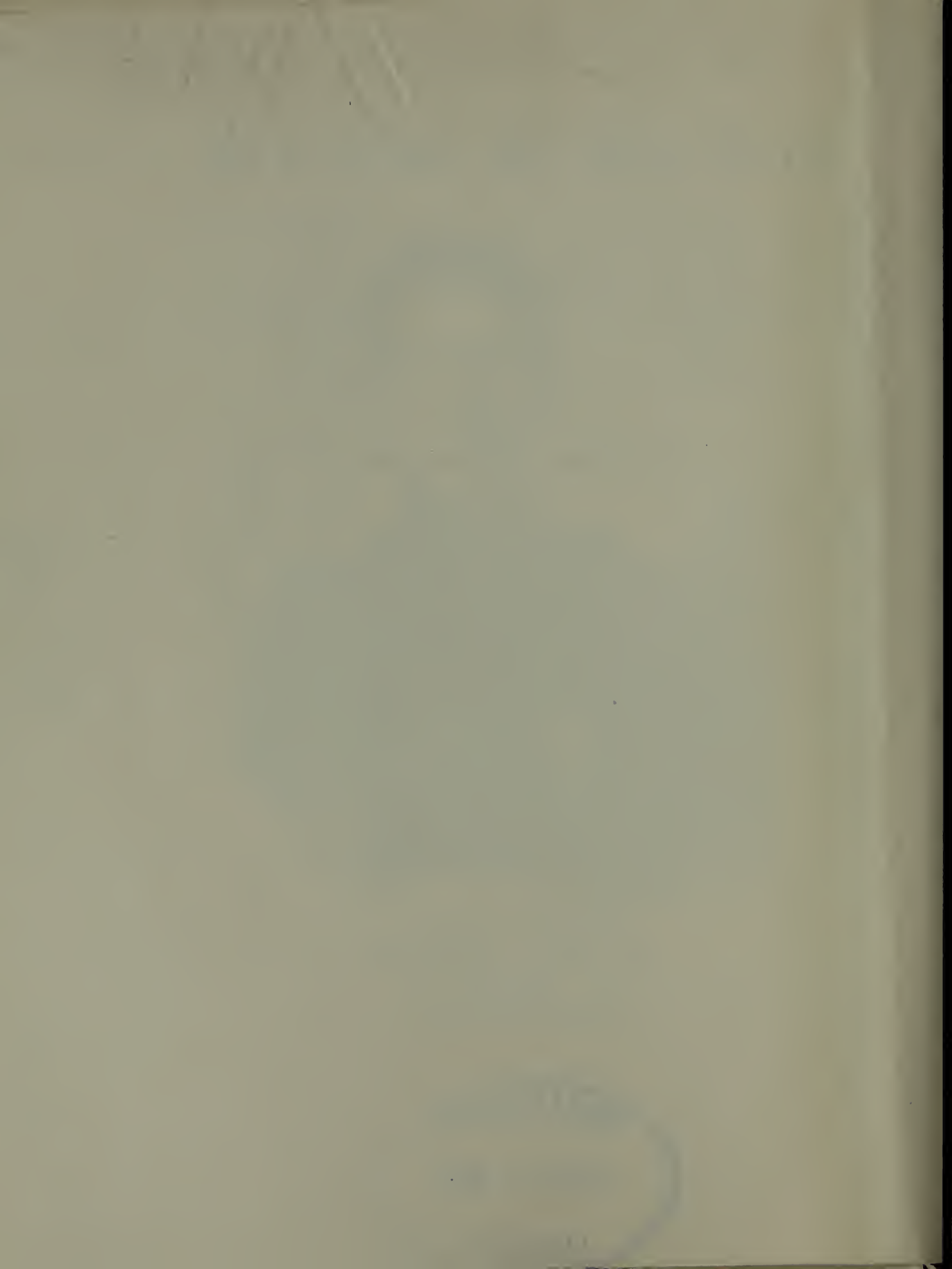
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endenhall
BY EMMA M. ANDERSON



EMMA M. ANDERSON
Hill and Hollow -- Grandin Road
CINCINNATI
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ELIZABETH NOURSE

ARTISTE LIVING IN PARIS

THE fact is mentioned in Julian Hawthorne's life of his father, that the great, great, great grandfather of Nathaniel bears one blot upon his memory, the condemnation for witchcraft of Rebecca Nourse. This ancestor in direct lineage of Elizabeth Nourse was born at Yarmouth, England, in 1621, and was executed for her faith at Salem in 1692. She is called in history "the witch," and many poets and story writers have retold the tale of her sufferings and her steadfastness.

When, upon one bright day in June, in 1862, in the city of Cincinnati, a happy mother kissed two little girl babies as they opened their wondering blue eyes for the first time in this great world, she did not dream that the unswerving devotion of "the witch" would be bequeathed to these children only in a different form, a steadfast love for and beautiful faith in art.

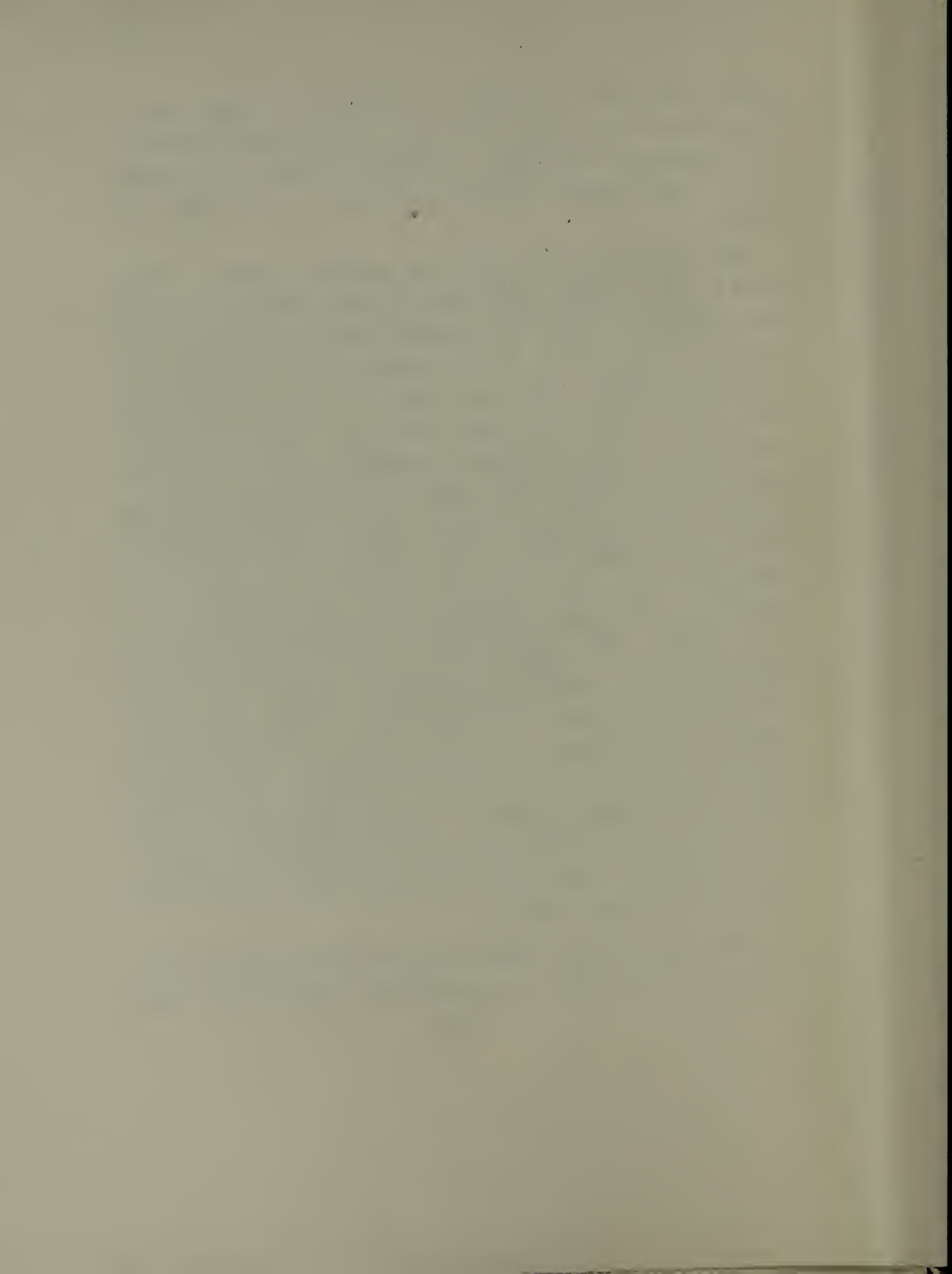
The question of "naming the baby," always a momentous one, became duplex in this case and finally resulted in the names of Elizabeth and Adelaide. In their happy childhood the sisters were seldom apart, and as their artistic natures developed, the sympathy between



them was most touching. I recall the very tone of Elizabeth's voice when, as some one admired her work, she answered invariably, "Adelaide thinks it is pretty too." Her sister's praise was dearer to her than any other.

Elizabeth soon showed the greater talent. While still in the nursery, her baby fingers, instead of using the pencil given her for making letters, decorated the leaves of her primer with sketches of her companions or of her teacher. She was never without a sketchbook to catch whatever of interest she saw. In her first little book may be seen familiar household objects—brooms, pans, dishes, chairs, bird cages, then followed studies of leaves, twigs, branches, bushes, trees. As she advanced there were pages filled with sketches of eyes, noses, mouths, chins, ears; every face she saw became interesting to this young enthusiast when she could use it as a model. Her favorite was the dear father, whose features were studied separately, until she dared venture to portray the whole face. This systematic method of working, so unusual in one so young, has characterized all of her study. She has climbed the ladder one round at a time. George Eliot tells us that "genius is at first little more than a capacity for receiving discipline," and such capacity Miss Nourse has displayed in fullest extent.

The parents died within a few months of each other, leaving the twin girls just coming into womanhood, and



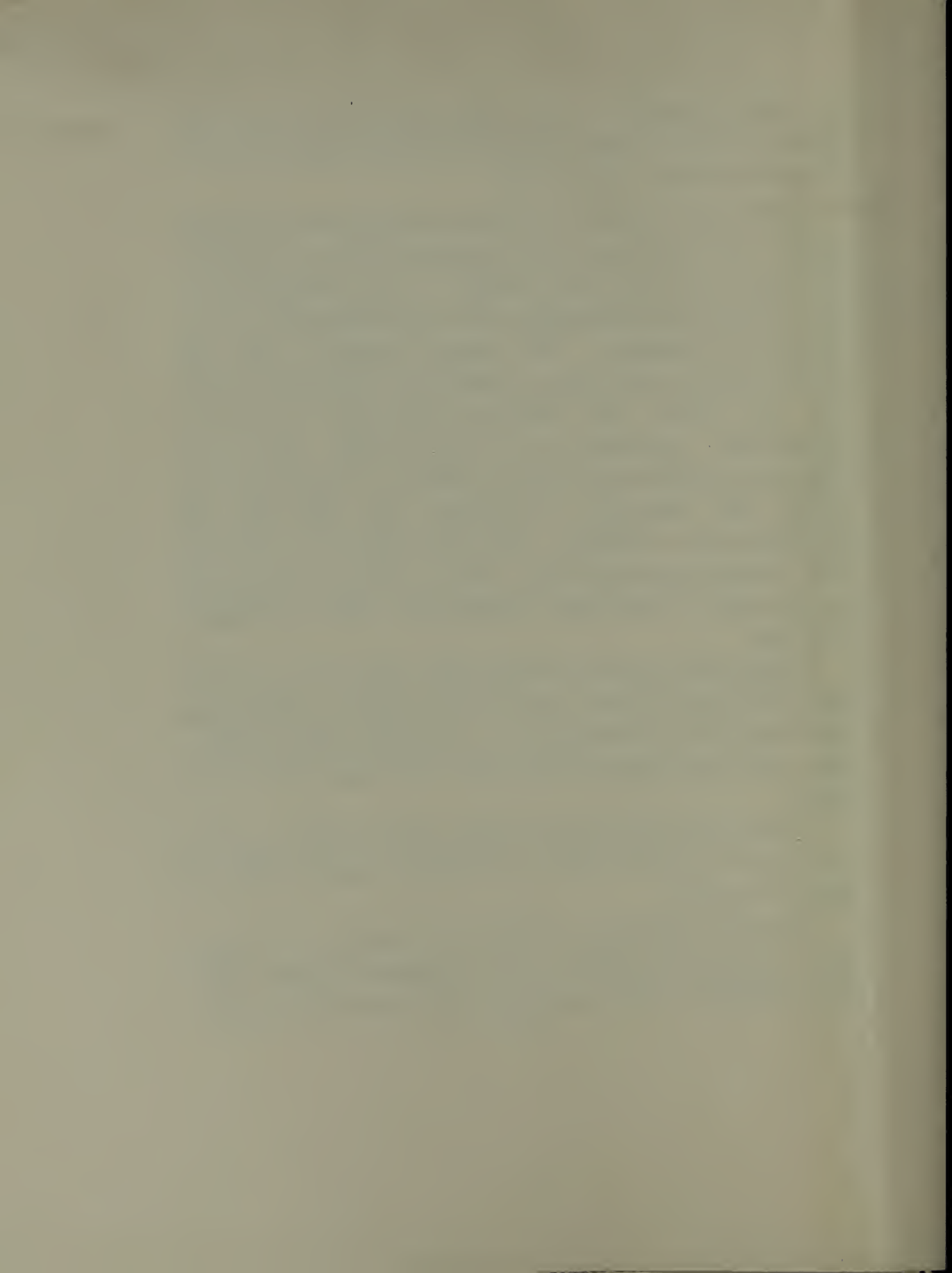
an older daughter, Louise, who, by her gentle care-taking, tried to fulfill the part of father and mother in those struggling, lonely days.

At the age of fourteen Elizabeth commenced a serious study of art, entering the Cincinnati School of Design, to draw from casts and models. Her faithfulness in the drudgery and discipline was remarkable for one so delicate in physique. She worked morning, noon and night without interruption, attending night school often till ten o'clock; and studying physiology, anatomy, perspective, modeling, and wood-carving. She won numerous medals and prizes offered to the classes to which she belonged, so excellent was all that she submitted for criticism. Later she began the study of the French language with a view to going abroad and at the age of twenty-five entered the Julian Academy in Paris.

During her sojourn in the Julian school she worked also in her own studio upon her first picture, which was exhibited the following year in the Salon Champs-Elysées, and her pictures have been seen there every year since.

In the fall of the same year she took for three months a course of Carolus Duran and Henner and in 1889 she went to Russia.

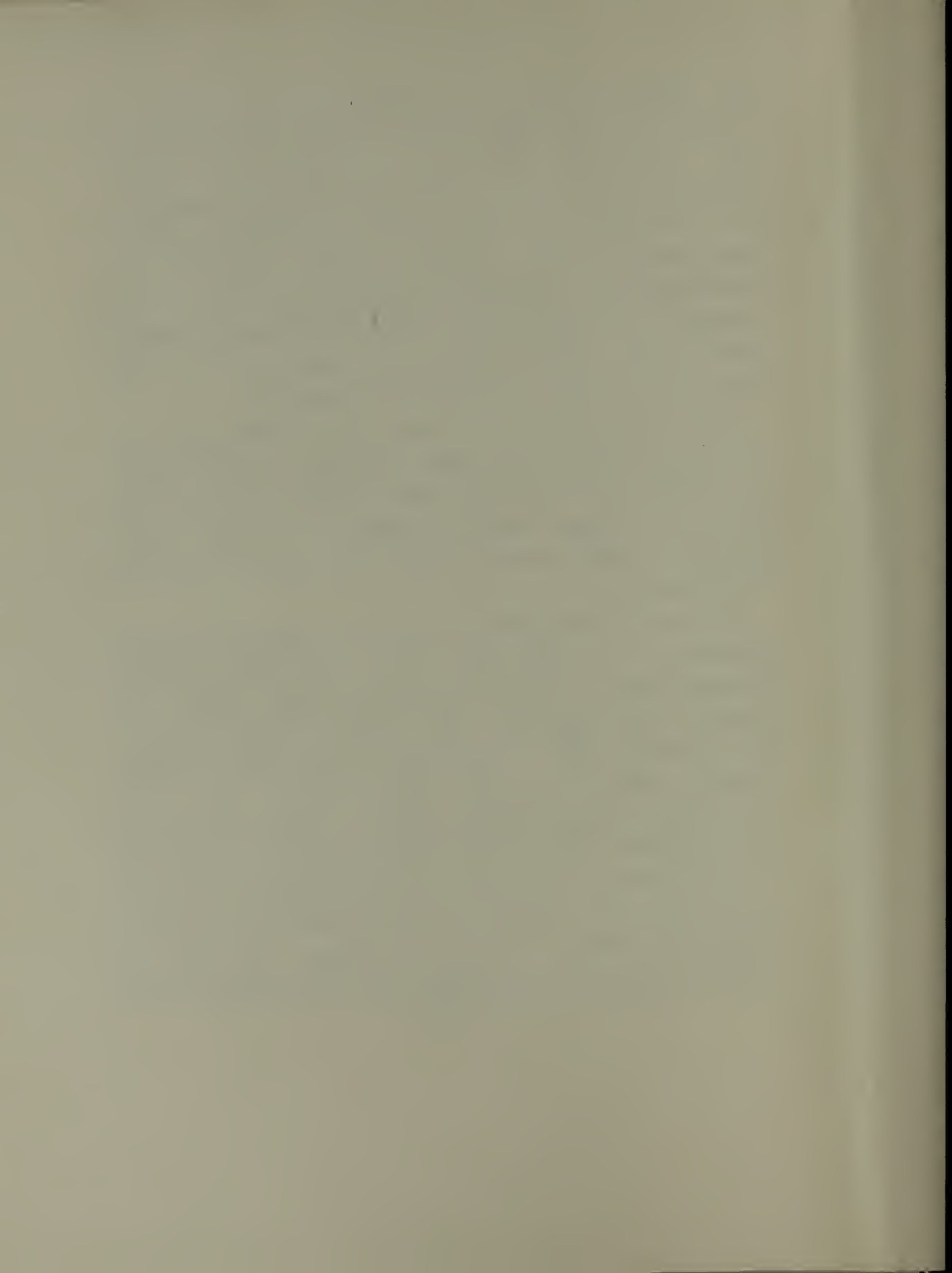
The Salon Champs de Mars was opened at this time and we find her following the younger masters. She has exhibited in this new Salon ever since its inaugura-



tion. Here the appreciation of her genius was evidenced in 1895, when she was elected an Associée des Beaux Arts. This honor, given to her unsought, is one seldom conferred upon a woman and above all upon a foreigner, for it associates her name with some of the greatest living French artists. Upon the occasion of her election to membership the Puvis de Chavannes spoke in terms of high praise of her in one of the Paris journals, saying that he had noticed her work for years and was glad that at last justice had been done its merits.

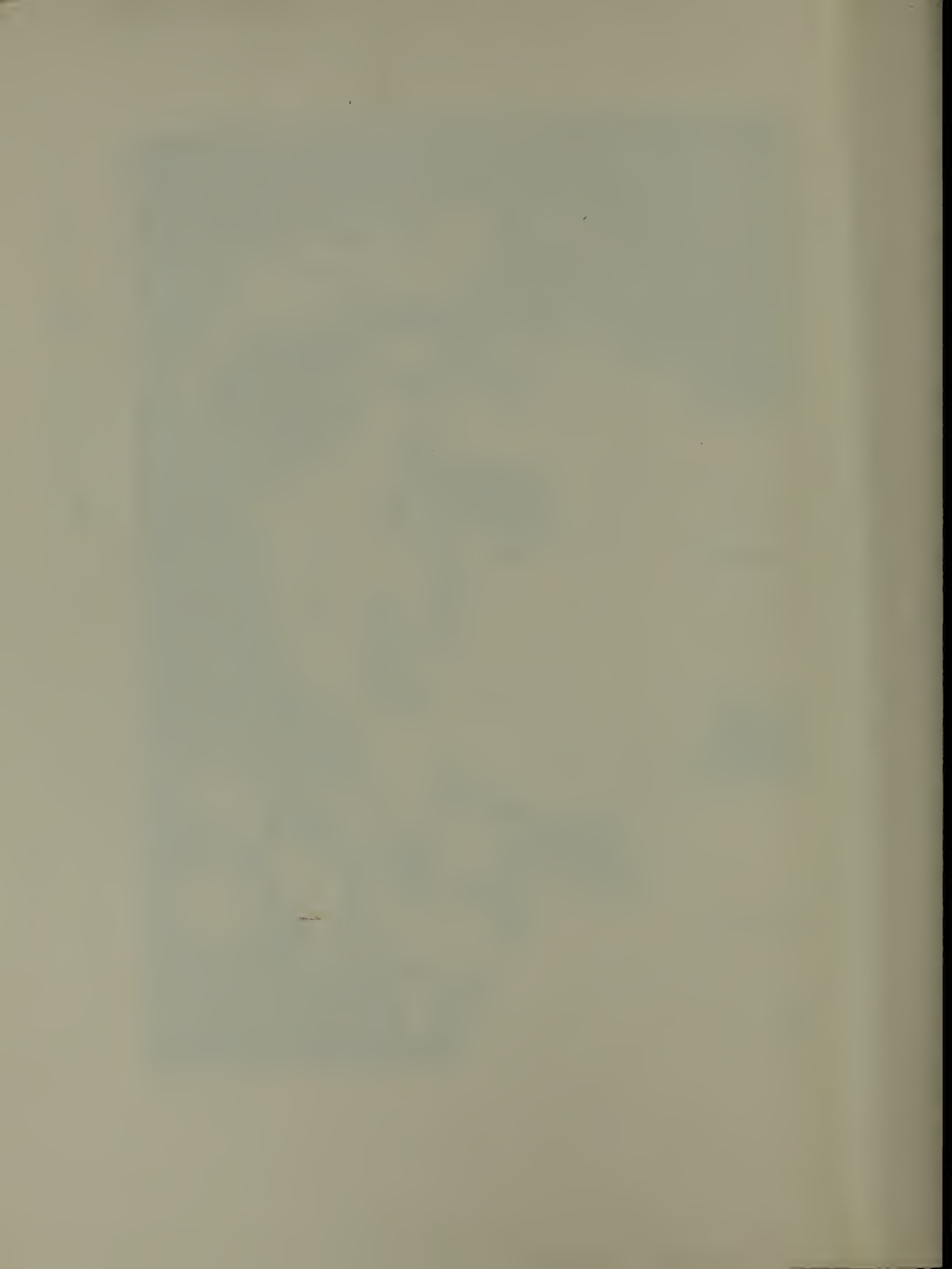
Upon her return to her native city in 1893, the Cincinnati Art Museum gave her a reception which proved a veritable ovation. Over one hundred pictures were shown and many found purchasers at prices which showed an appreciation of such a high grade of artistic workmanship.

It would be impossible to give a complete list of her pictures, as she has sold them continually without keeping account of the numerous water colors, oils, pastels, and sculptures done in this country and in Europe since 1880. Regarding her modeling, Preston Powers, son of the great Hiram Powers, said, "You should never again touch a brush, but devote yourself to sculpture." Her work has been represented in the Royal Academy in England, in Berlin, Munich, Cologne and Dusseldorf. In most of these places she has been invited to exhibit. This is an honor, for then the artist's expenses are paid and the work is not subjected





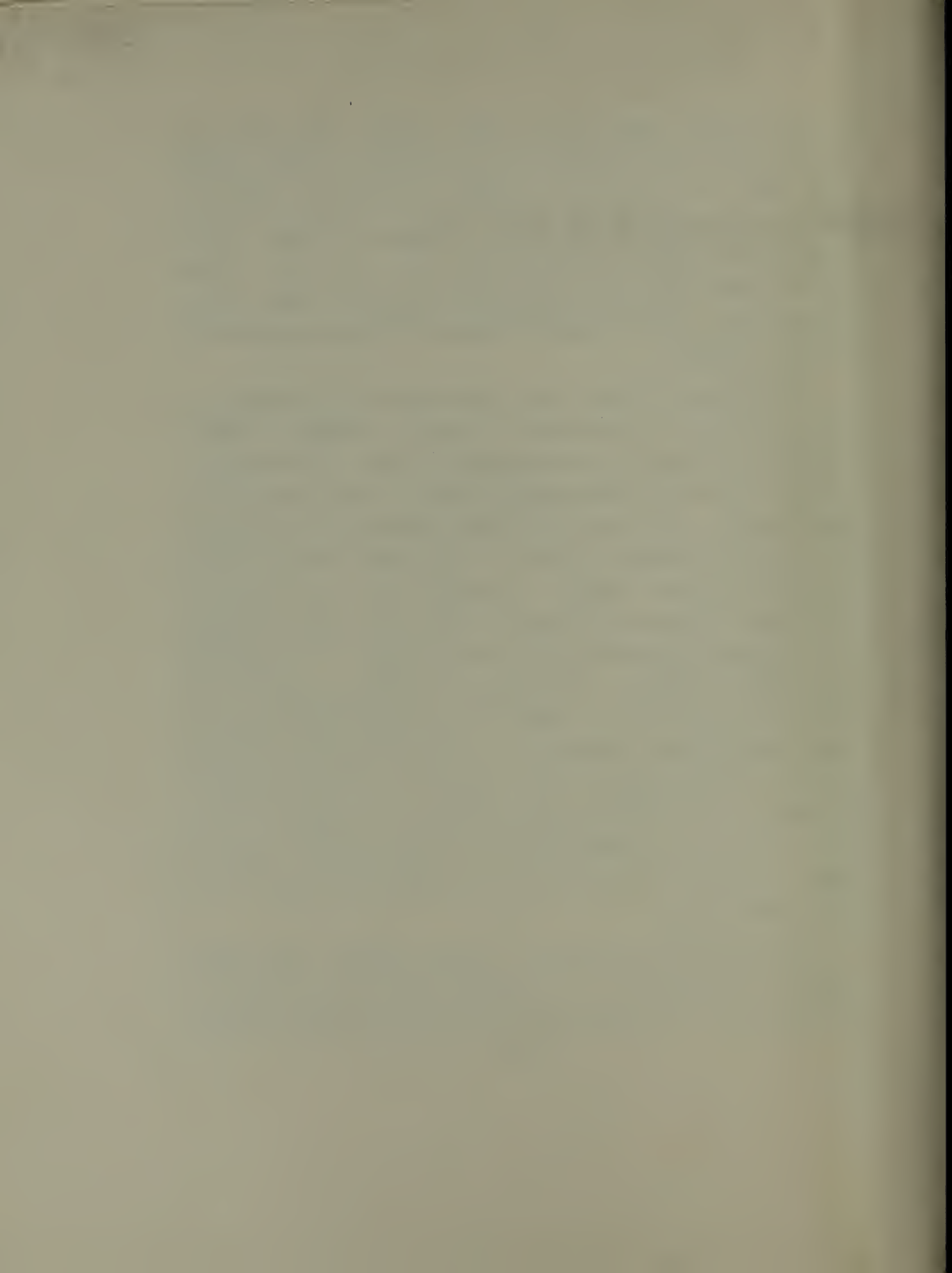
Elizabeth Anne



to the jury's inspection. Her largest canvases are those which were exhibited in the Salon of 1894, 1895 and 1896. In this year of 1896, she had four pictures hung on the line in the Salon Champs de Mars. The subjects represent peasant life, indoor and out. She loves to live with these humble folk and to study their simple lives. She is greatly beloved by them, especially by the children.

"The Family Meal" here reproduced was painted in Paris in 1891, and exhibited in the Paris Salon of 1892. It will doubtless be remembered by many of the visitors at the Columbian Exposition, where it was awarded a gold medal. Owners of the official illustrated catalogue of the Art Building will find it reproduced there as one considered most worthy of preservation, and readers of Harper's Bazaar will recall a finely executed full-page wood engraving made of it for that paper. The canvas was sold in Chicago. The picture is a typical one, for it does not merely tell a story, it possesses also the ease and naturalness of expression which gives to all art that charm of appealing to the beholder, as the beholder appeals to it. Notice the reverence revealed in every line of the man's bowed head as he says grace, the earnest attention of the woman, the faraway look in the little girl's eyes.

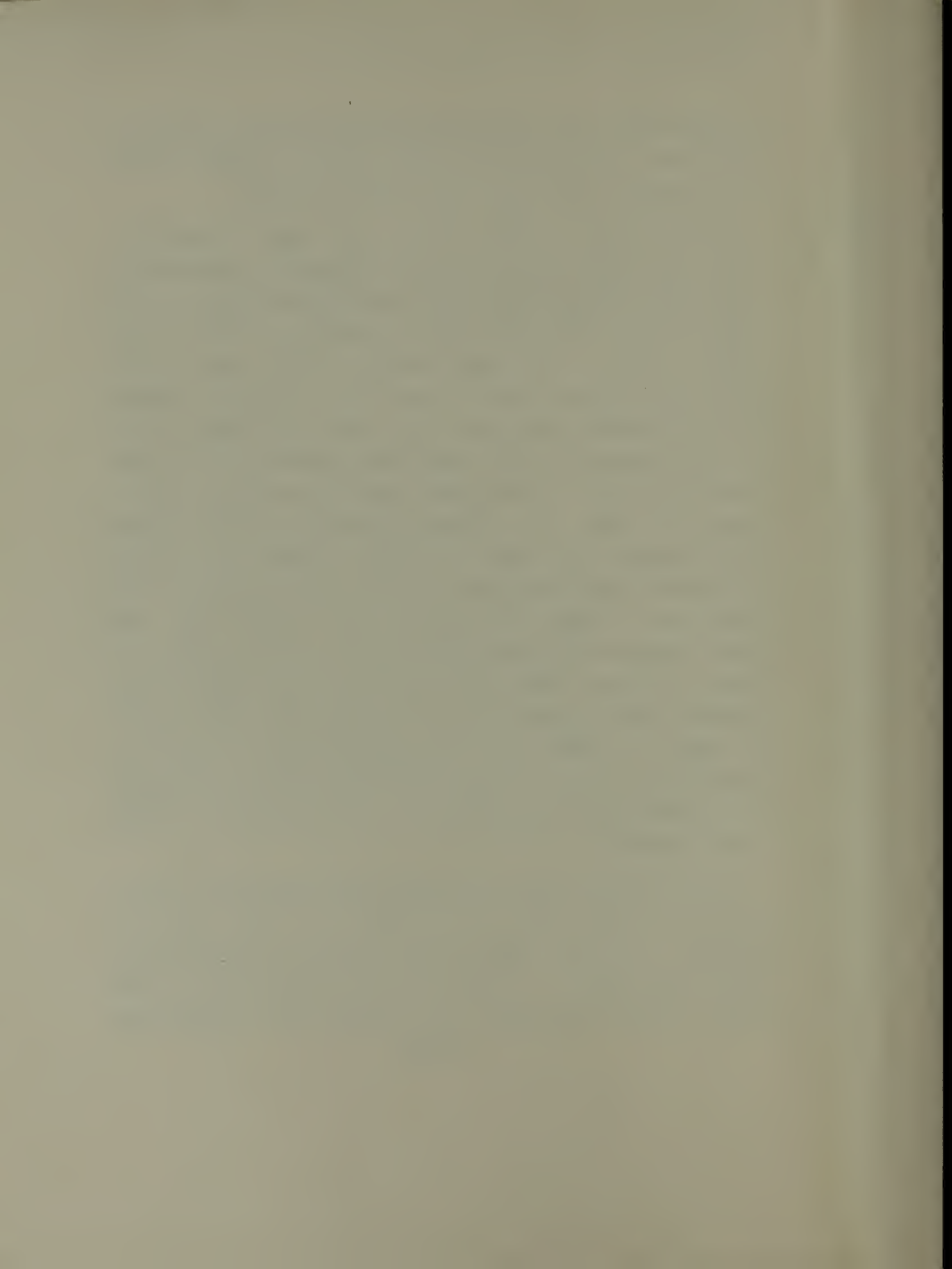
The masterly composition "Good Friday," is a most natural arrangement of kneeling peasants kissing the crucifix, yet so grouped that the vibrating light falling



on their white caps and sleeves carries the line of composition into the picture and bask into the shadow, where it is repeated and lost in the depth of color.

The portrait of Miss Nourse was done in pastel by Cav. C. M. Ross and is one of his happiest productions. It is most lifelike, giving that beautiful expression which lights up her face when she is speaking of the art she loves so well. The simple fashion of her hair, as she always has worn it since I knew her in the Art School, her unassuming costume with a rose carelessly caught in the corsage, and the wonderful modeling of the face, would lead one to think this might have been a photograph from life. Mr. Ross's beautiful studio in Rome was formerly the atelier of Elihu Vedder, and within its Gobelin-lined walls the wonderful illustrations of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam were drawn. Mr. and Mrs. Vedder still retain their home in this building on Capo le Casa. Here Elizabeth and her sister Louise passed many happy hours. As she sat to this master of chalks, he told of his Norwegian home in stories as beguiling as those of Hans Christian Andersen himself. The tales have been published under the title of "Pinks and Cherries."

Miss Nourse's life in Paris is of such simplicity that to visit her studio, 80 le rue d'Assas, is to find oneself in another world from that of the fashion and excitement which surround it. Here she lives with the devoted sister, Louise, who gives her whole life to Elizabeth,

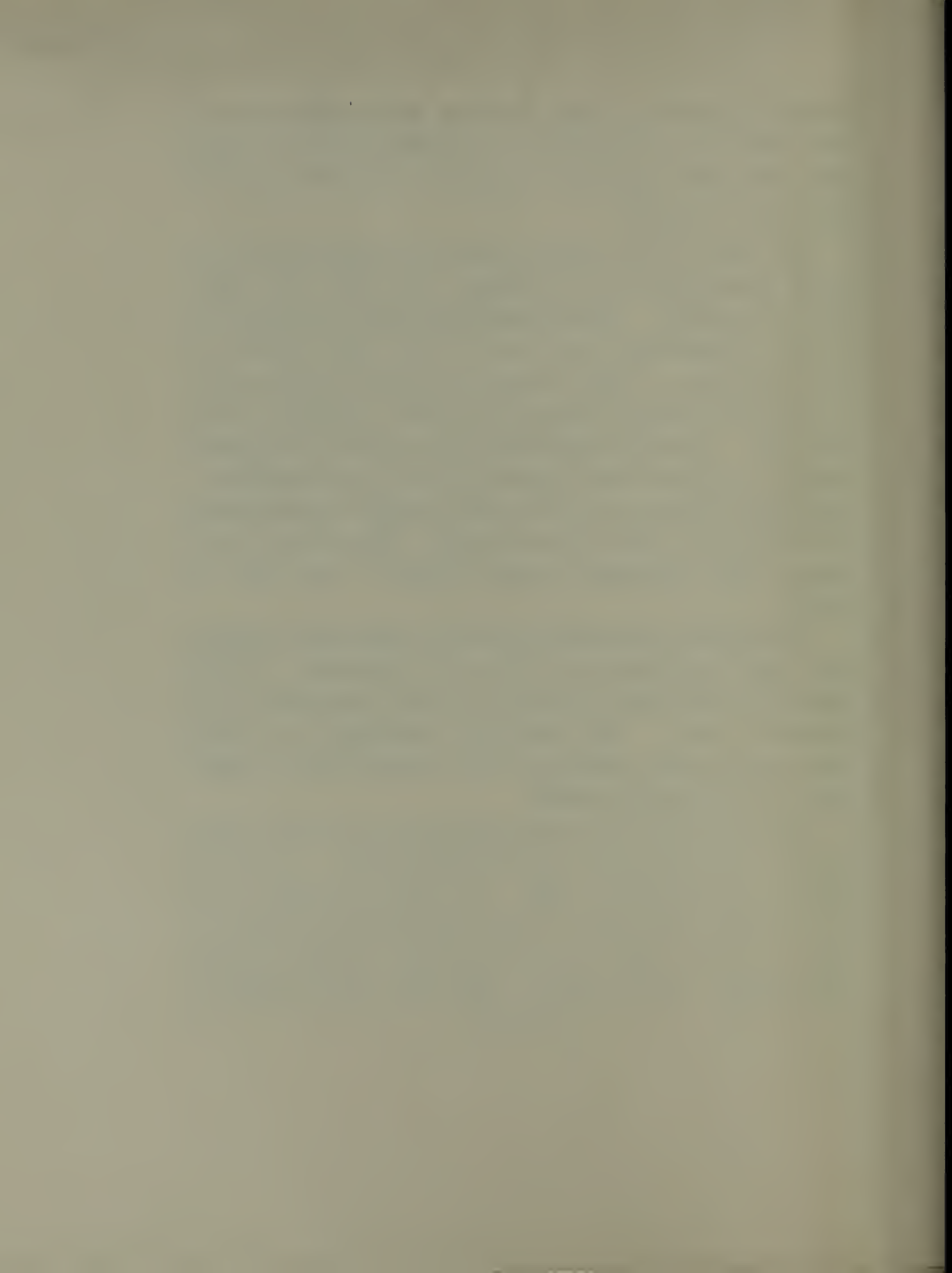


waiting upon her, caring for her, even calling her to her meals, the absorption of painting being so great that the artist forgets that eating is a necessary part of each day's progress.

The corner of her studio shows an interior devoid of those accumulations of claptrap too often the accessories of ateliers. Such furnishing mark the painter of studio arrangements, and not the one who studies the heart of things. Miss Nourse's work and her life show a moral and mental harmony of which simplicity is the keynote. Thus she exemplifies the maxims of two great artists: "The more one knows the more one simplifies," said Alfred Stevens, and the same thought was expressed by William M. Hunt, when he said, "Elaboration is not beauty and sandpaper never finished a bad piece of work."

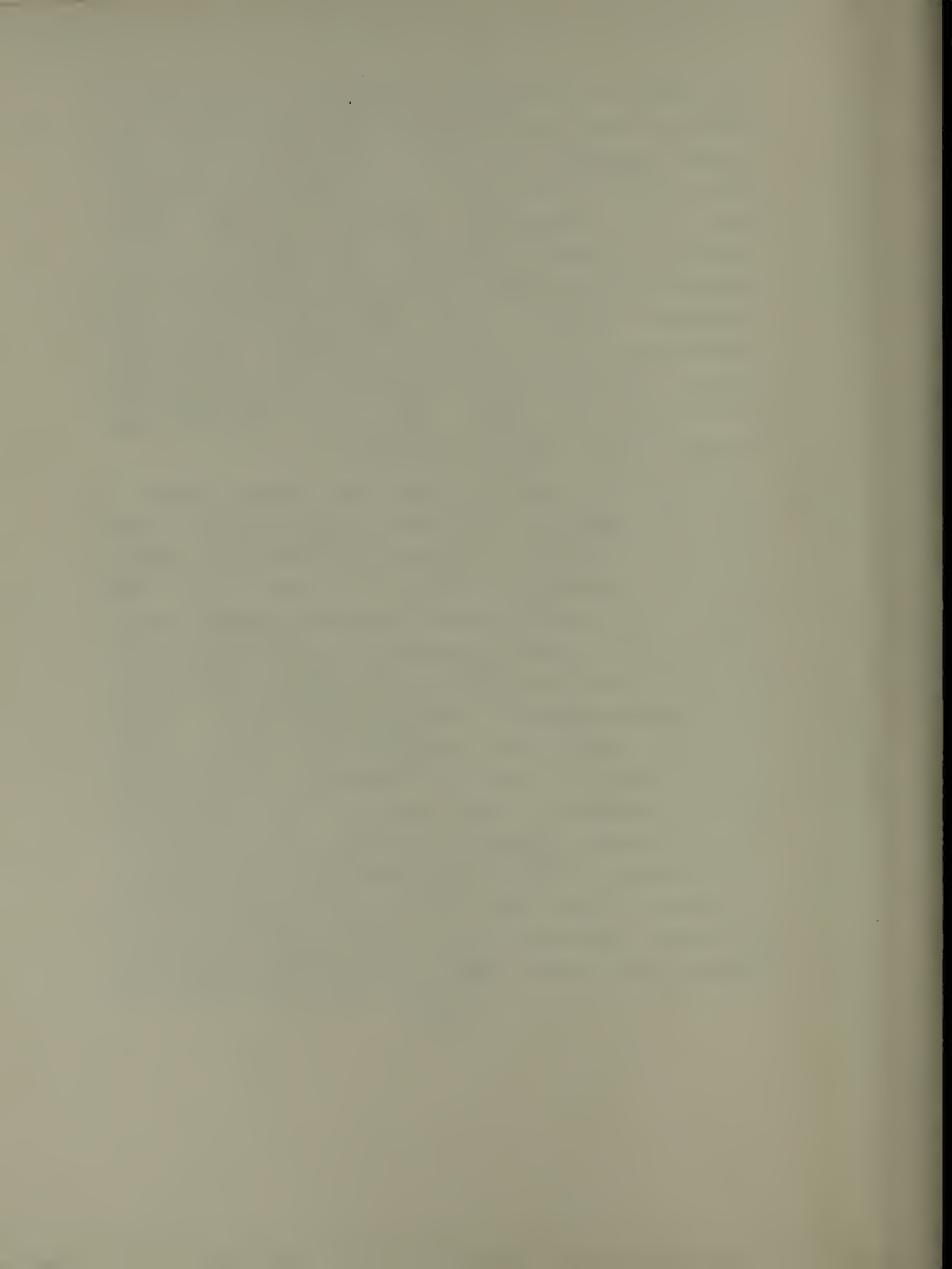
The genius of Elizabeth Nourse is especially exemplified, says the French Art Critic M. Dubuisson, "In the naiveté of the baby's attitude and the tenderness of the mother's love." The beautiful spirituality of which characterizes any painting of this artist is but a reflection of the woman herself.

Recently Miss Nourse has had the honor to be added to the august group of "Laetaré Médalists." A society which was founded in 1882. It always announces the name of the recipient at a Mass held on the fourth Sunday in Lent, called "Laetaré Sunday," which signifies "Rejoicing," and is closed with the priest's blessing,



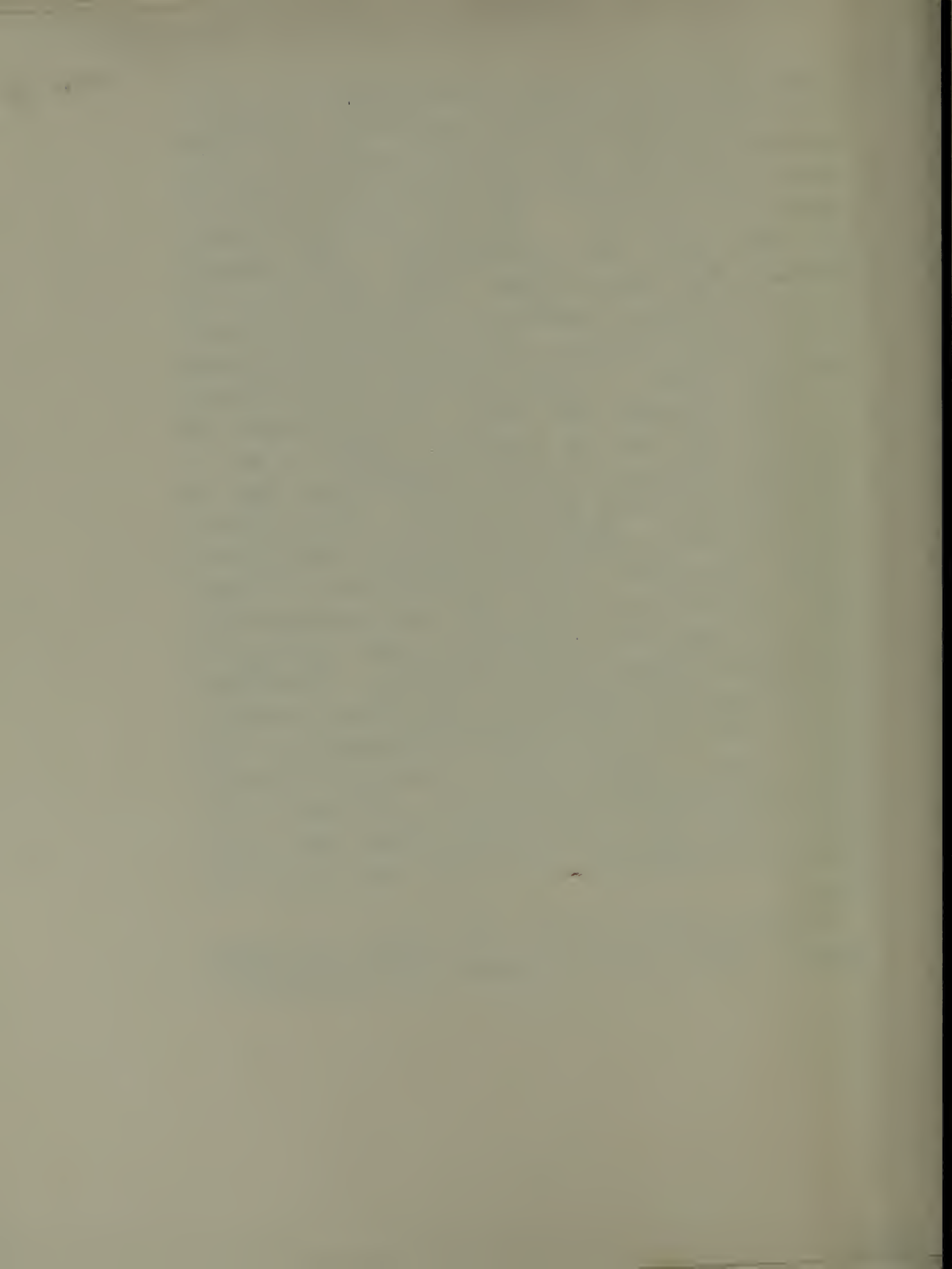
"Let peace be in strength and abundance in thy towers." There is a long list of notable men and women from varied professions who have received this beautiful gold medal, the first name being in 1883, John Gilmary Shea, the distinguished Historian of the Roman Catholic Church in America. The first woman to receive this honor was in the field of Literature—Miss Catharine Conway. In Art, Miss Nourse ranks as the first woman to receive the Laetaré Medal. I take great pride in quoting Clement Barnhorn, of the Cincinnati Art Museum, as saying, "She is unquestionably the premier woman artiste of America."

Miss Nourse and her sister were living quietly in Paris, she painting and Louise keeping house, when rumors of war began to appear, and I would like, before giving her experience in letters, to quote from "*The Figaro*," how startling some of these unexpected rumors of the world war were appearing, not only at the embassies but at the clubs and also at the office of *The Figaro*, where people gathered to learn the latest news. "After dinner the building was crowded with writers, society people, financiers, actors and actresses, discussing the exciting problem of the moment. The impressions about war being declared were rapidly growing worse." "Wednesday, the 29th of July, 1914, late in the forenoon, President Poincaré and M. Viviani returned to Paris and were applauded on the way from the station. Rumors from the war office said Baron von Schoen had



made a call on M. Viviani, and the French government, in view of Germany's military preparations, of which we were receiving such alarming reports with every passing hour, would be forced to take similar measures of mobilization the next day." "The next morning, Thursday the 30th, was a very exciting time." One sensation followed close upon another. First came word that Austria had begun hostilities by bombarding Belgrade and Germany's military preparations had become more definitely known. As these alarming reports followed in close succession the cabinet, at the insistence of General Joffre and M. Messimy, decided at last to authorize, subject to important qualifications, that our covering troops take their positions." Then followed a bulletin, that an official newspaper had issued a special edition, announcing a general mobilization in Germany and the news from the war office kept growing worse. German troops were barricading roads, crossing the frontier and seizing French automobiles. "The Editor of the *Figaro* had retired to an upper office to write an article, which had to be published the next day, when about eleven o'clock someone rapped and shouted: 'Henri de Rothschild is down stairs. He dined with a man of high rank at the Foreign Office, who assured him that we shall have war in a few days, if not a few hours.'"

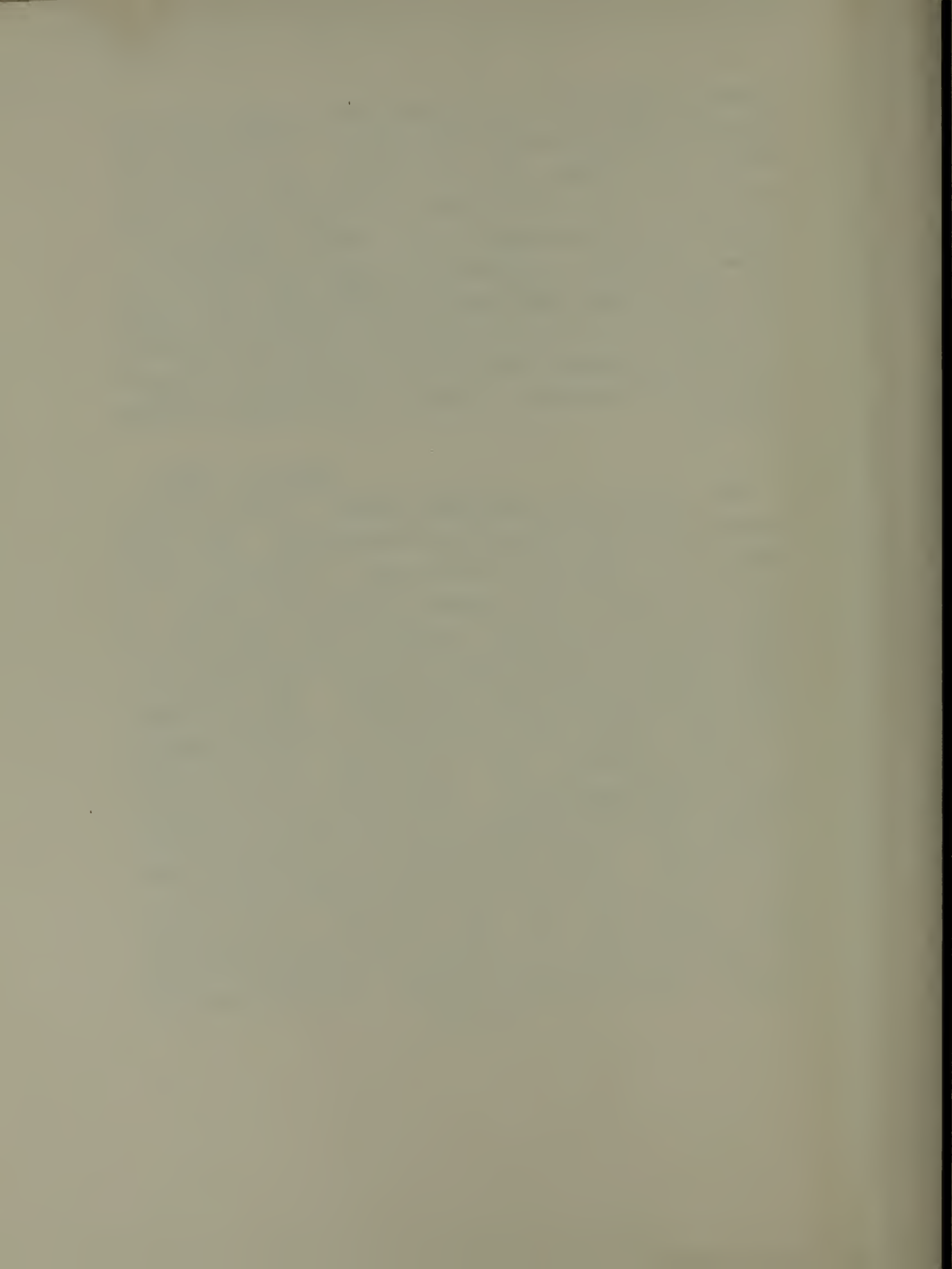
Friday, the 31st of July, 1914, Jaures was assassinated. "Under such conditions the assassination of



Jaures, deplorable as it certainly was, would not have serious consequences for the nation." "What does the death of a single man, no matter how prominent, amount to? In a few hours, or a few weeks at most, hundreds of thousands of men will be slaughtered." About midnight a telephone message was received at the office of the *Petit Journal*, stating that the former Foreign Minister was sending them a proof of his article, in which he declared that war was imminent, and summoned all Frenchmen to rally to the defense of their country.

August 1, 1914.

"We heard the resounding clatter of the cavalry moving down the Boulevard Montmartre. The hoof beats of the cuirassiers drew nearer. Suddenly it was as if an electric shock passed through the crowd. A moment later the cavalry appeared, the men were in field equipment, their helmets covered, their long overcoats making them seem like giants. They occupied the whole width of the boulevard. A rolling thunder of voices shouting "Vive la France! Vive l'Armée! greeted their appearance." About one o'clock that day General Joffre was urging with all his power immediate mobilization. Three hours later it was posted in front of the postal station in the Boulevard des Italiennes, a man rushing into the office shouting, 'It's posted.' On the little paper was written the simple but fateful words, 'Order of utmost urgency. General mobiliza-

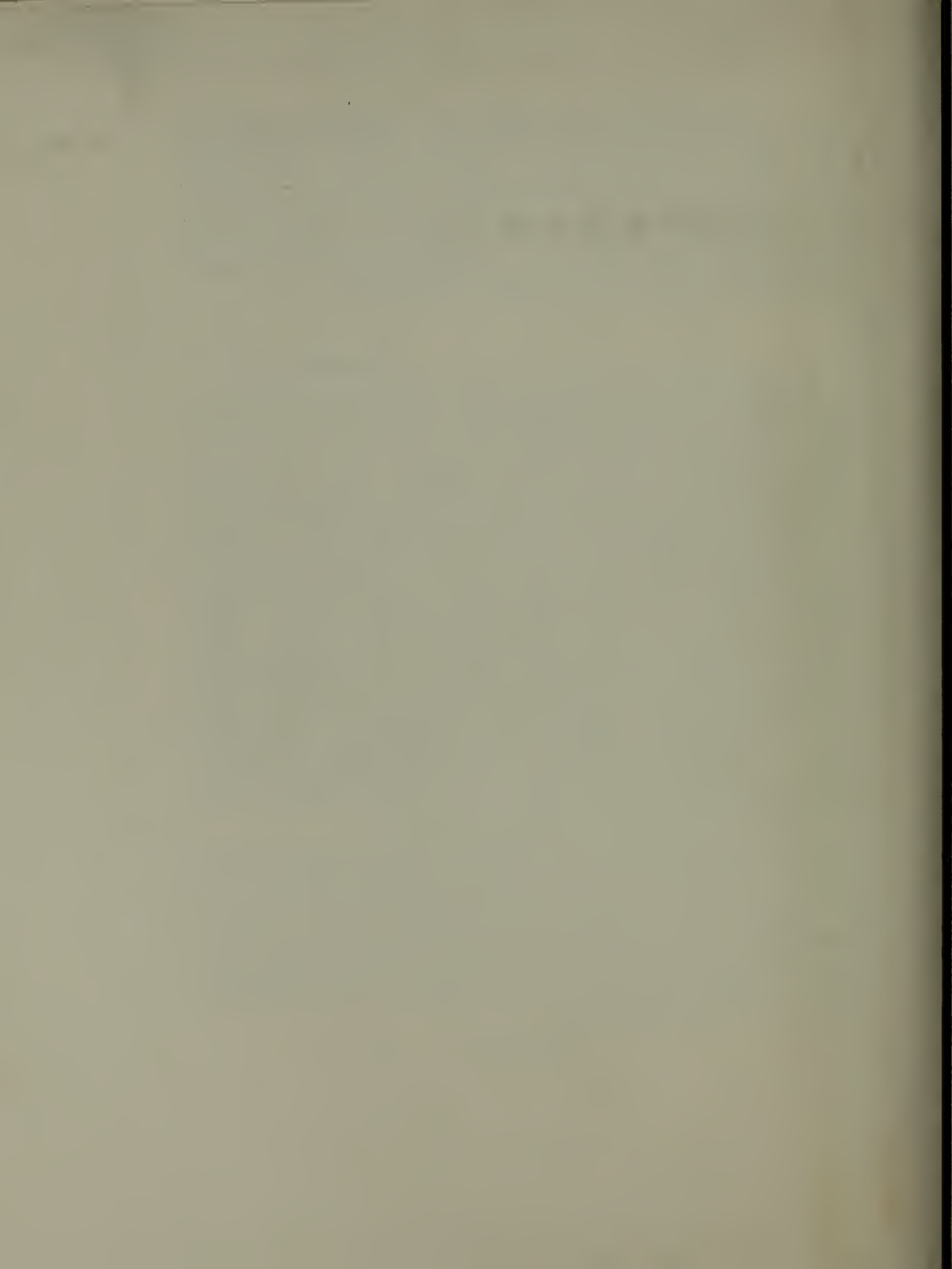


tion of our forces by land and sea. Sunday, August 2, first day of mobilization.' That was all. That night after dinner at the Foreign Office the Russian ambassador came in and said with deep emotion, "Germany has just declared war upon us.' A Frenchman of our party remarked 'It will be our turn tomorrow.'"

August 3, 1914.

It seems since July 30th, Austria-Hungarian Monitors had been bombarding Belgrade. Now, four days later, after Germany had already declared war on Russia, and was about to declare war on France, the ambassador of Austria-Hungary was busying himself with a denial of this bombardment. This country seemed unable to comprehend the situation, she was still preoccupied solely with her little controversy with Serbia; quite unaware that her acts had started an incomparably *greater* conflict. Frivolity and lack of comprehension on Austria's part, *criminal* premeditation on Germany's part! The latter, willing war, pounced upon its *opportunity* and did not let it go. The whole origin of the drama is condensed in those few words."

Miss Nourse being a staunch American, her sympathies are with the people among whom she has lived for so many years—naturally her outlook is by no means restricted. She remained in Paris during all the confusion of the world war days, in order to give assistance to the sick and suffering.



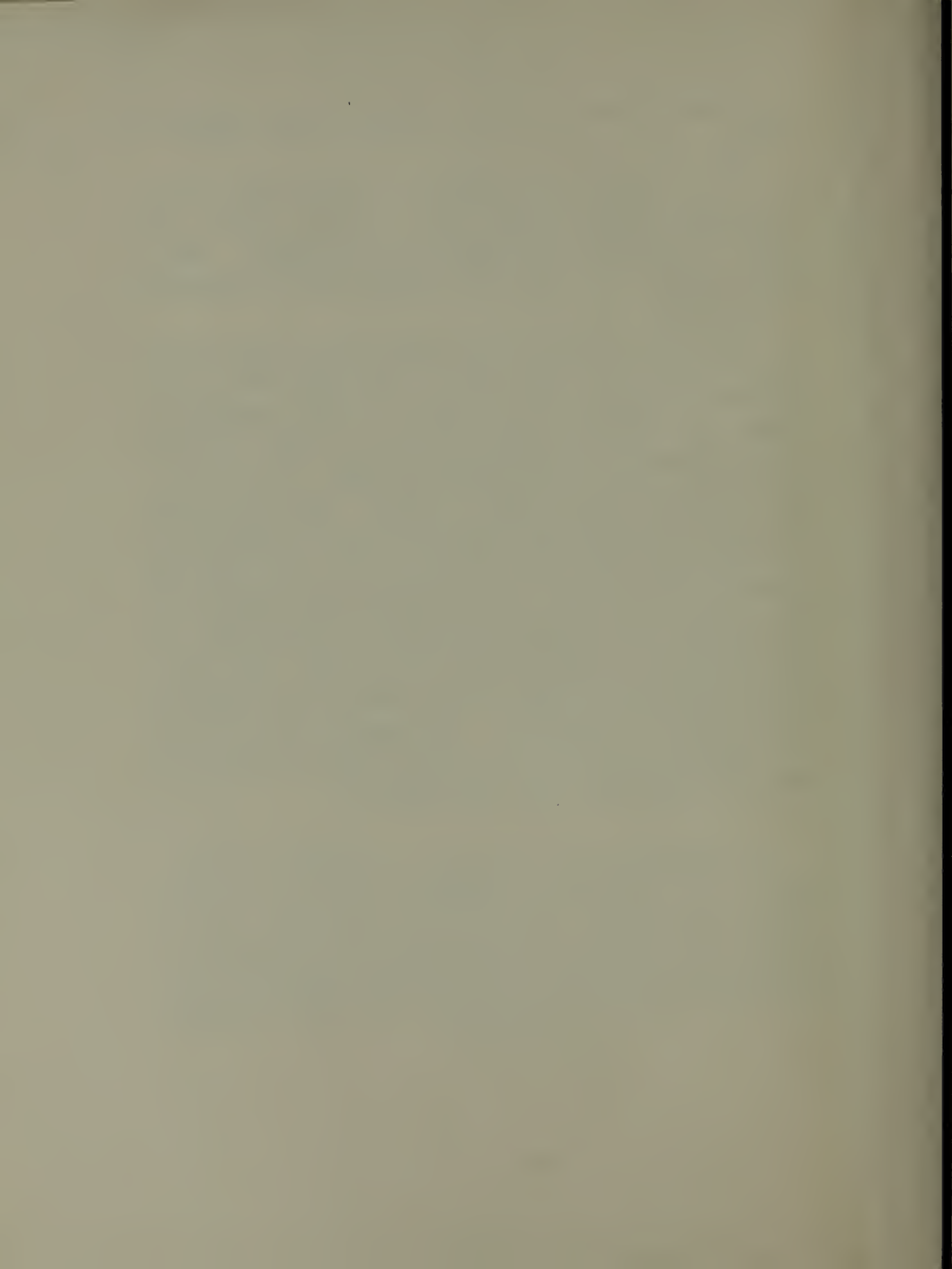
Quoting from one of her letters, Paris, August 4, 1914:

"Here we are in the midst of a terrible war. Even the great rolling clouds have a sinister look. Last night the heavens were lighted by searchlights. Only a week ago all was calm, how things have precipitated themselves!"

"There are dreadful rumors and we are told that we should draw our money out of the bank and get our *permet de Séjour*. We should feel like cowards to desert now after all the kindness we have received during these years of residence in France. No, no, no—we are going to stay right in Paris. When the order for a general mobilization came the whole world seemed to swarm into the streets; the young men were calm and seemed anxious to go—but it was heartbreaking to see the young wives, sisters and mothers wiping their eyes and holding the hands of their dear ones. The auto-buses all stopped, taken off for service to the field of battle with the chauffeurs. The groceries were closed, the bakers were allowed to make bread for forty-one days, but after that what will happen?"

August 5, 1914.

"The Americans are equipping a hospital at Neuilly, paying for everything—volunteer American doctors going to take charge. Today a gay crowd of Americans, all decorated with French and American flags and colors, singing and clapping their hands, as they had no musical



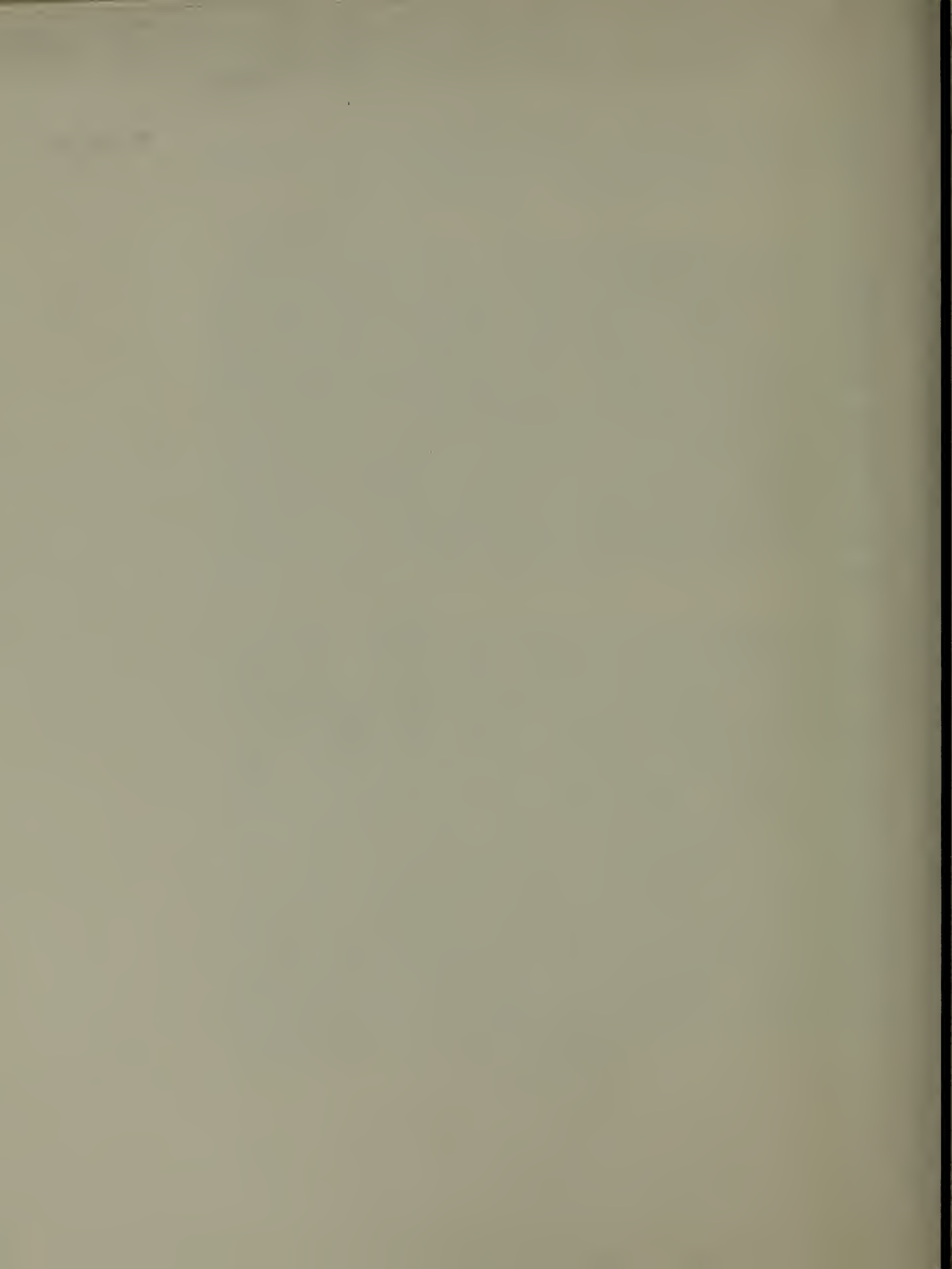
instruments or band to play, cheering for La France and for the United States. God bless them."

August 6, 1914.

"The tiny newspapers seem to shrink in one night, but are full of horrible news. Seven nations fighting, each for its life. Poor little Belgium invaded, how brave they are. France now looking for their 80,000 black troops from Africa. The widow of Bartholdi, the sculptor of the statue of Liberty, in New York Harbor, lives next door to us. She is alone with her maids and one old man. He said he was from the Jura, a natural born fighter, but too old to go to the front. He said he had four guns and if we needed him to call over the wall."

August 9, 1914.

"The papers are full of the first victory. The boy scouts are active as messengers. The French pronounce it 'Scoots.' Everything is wonderfully organized—20,000 sailors are to help the women in the fields. The women will make the bread if the shops can be kept open to sell it. The women clean the streets and are conductors on the few street cars running. The 'Bon Marché,' the 'Printemps,' and all the large stores have offered parts of their buildings for hospitals. No one can go in or out of Paris without a passport and not at all after six o'clock p. m. At night the flash-lights are so terrifying. What I am afraid of is the Zeppelins. The emotion of the first days have now given place



to a dreadful silence, in which you can hear your heart beat."

August 26, 1914.

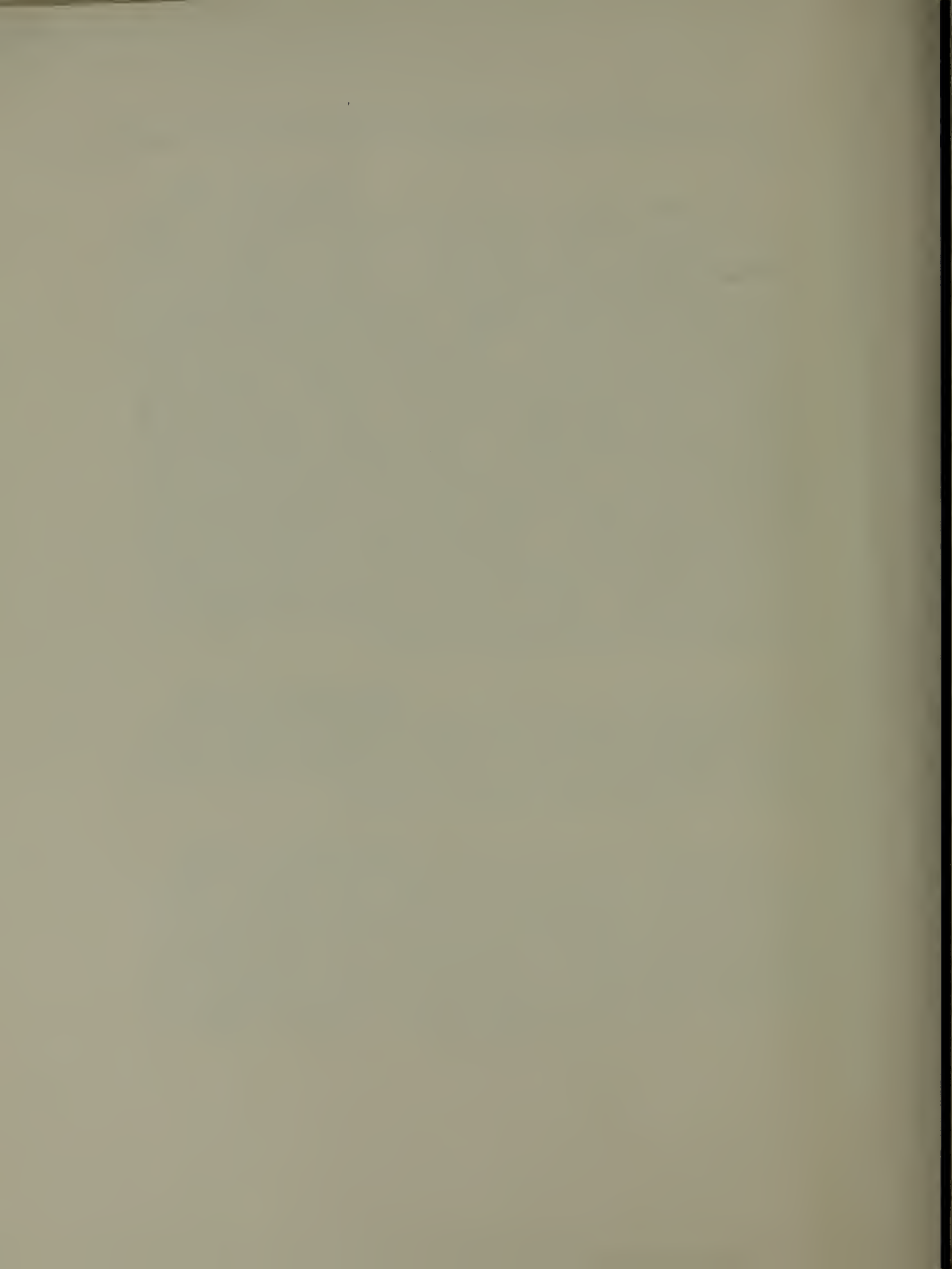
"We were told to lay in provisions, macaroni, sugar and oatmeal. We could get no salt. Some of the wounded have arrived in Paris. All are anxious to be cured and sent back to fight. Fifteen hundred Belgian refugées have arrived. They have been put up in one of the circuses, chairs being used for beds. These poor people were too dazed to talk. Four hundred little children were with them. The world is full of lamentation and woe. Today, by the best authority, we were told we must leave Paris; that the Germans would be here in eight days." "Also, we were told that if we did not go we must be prepared to live in the cellar, perhaps, for six months. Paris is full of soldiers and they are getting ready for the supreme effort."

September 1, 1914.

"Now the time has come when we shall be shut in the city, no letters to come or go, no news of the outer world; everyone who can go is fleeing."

September 3, 1914.

"Yesterday, for the fourth time, the enemy threw bombs on us. Looking out of the window, just over the trees in the Luxembourg Garden, I saw the Zeppelin called 'La Taube' like a great bird of prey circling back and forth and the artillery began trying to bring it



down. It finally flew back toward the north. There are milk cows pastured in the Bois for the babies and the sick. We use malted milk.

September 6, 1914.

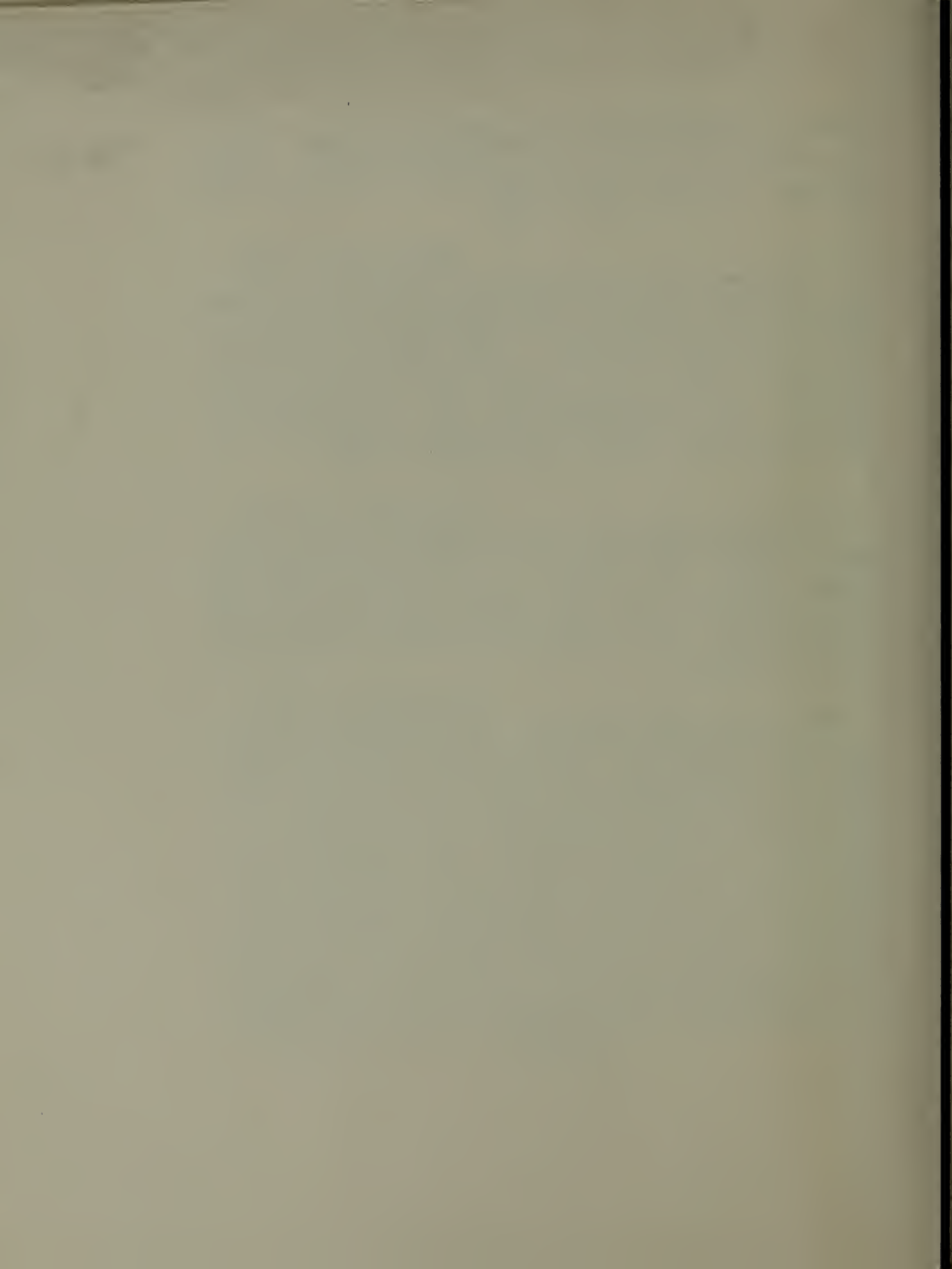
"Yesterday our blood was almost turned to ice, it was reported the Germans were pounding on the gates of Paris with their mailed fists. We could hear the cannon booming. Most of our friends have left, leaving no address. We are delighted that our Ambassador, Mr. Herrick, and Mr. Bacon, still remain to help.

September 10, 1914.

"The fight still goes on, but the enemy is slowly being driven back. The director of the Luxembourg has kindly offered to store my pictures with those of the Luxembourg. Isn't he kind; everything is thought of in case of siege."

September 13, 1914.

"We are very sad these days, for hourly the wounded are being brought in. Last Sunday, our worst day, when the giant fight was going on just outside the fortifications, they brought into the hospital seven thousand five hundred wounded. The American hospital is doing splendid work and some kind American has just given ten ambulance automobiles, which are kept constantly going to the battle field for the wounded and bringing them to the hospital, Germans and French are treated alike, the wounded have no nationality."



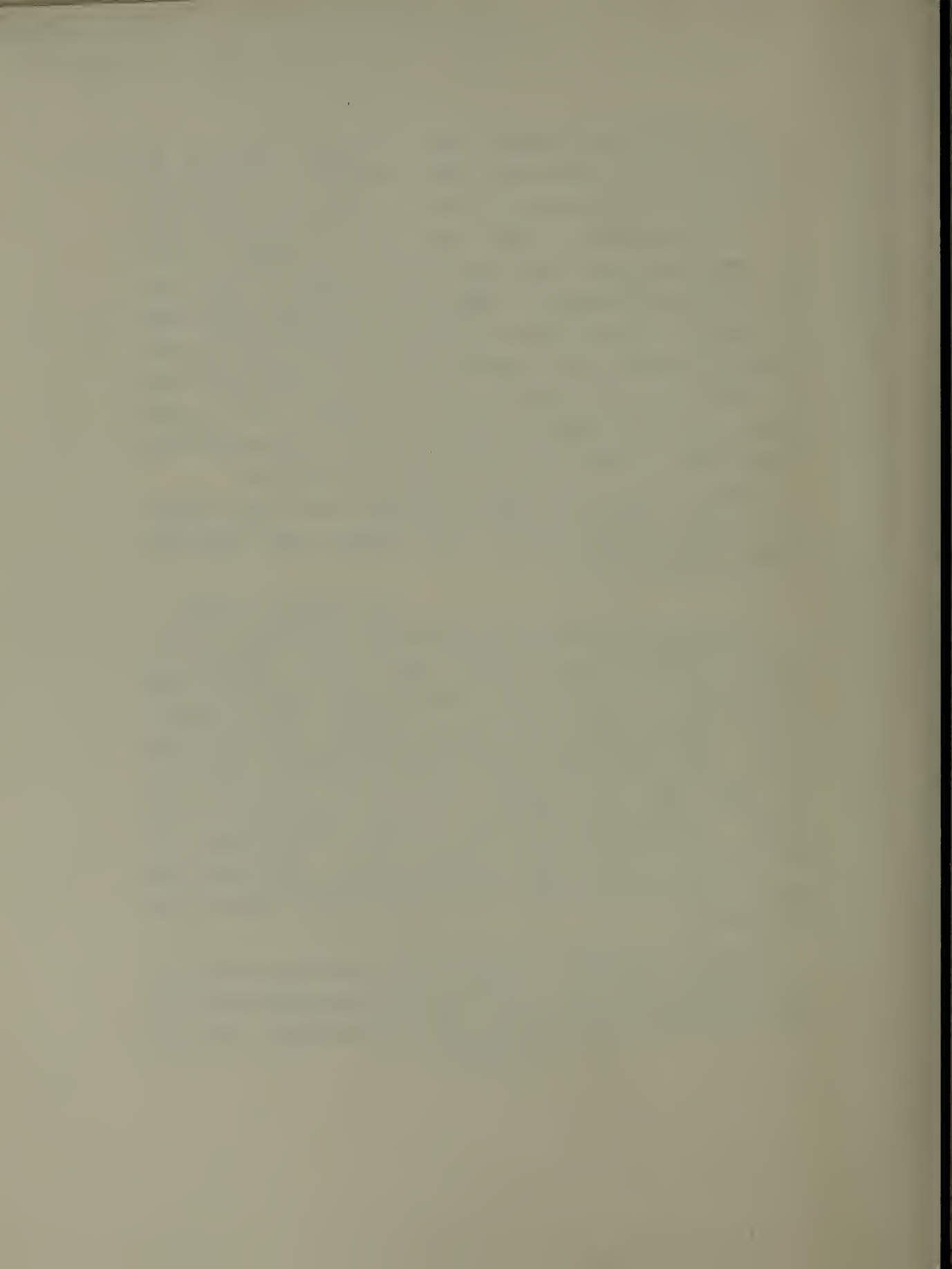
After the great shock that fell upon them at the opening of the world war, Miss Nourse and her sister did a great deal of work in Paris and had very little time for writing letters. They were also in delicate health by such strenuous work and were obliged to go away for awhile in Brittany. When they returned they were too much occupied with sewing garments for the poor, healing the sick and unpacking boxes, which were sent to them from America, to write letters, and a great many months passed without much communication from them to their many friends in America.

I wish I had more space to quote all of her letters, but I will mention only a few things that happened from a letter dated—

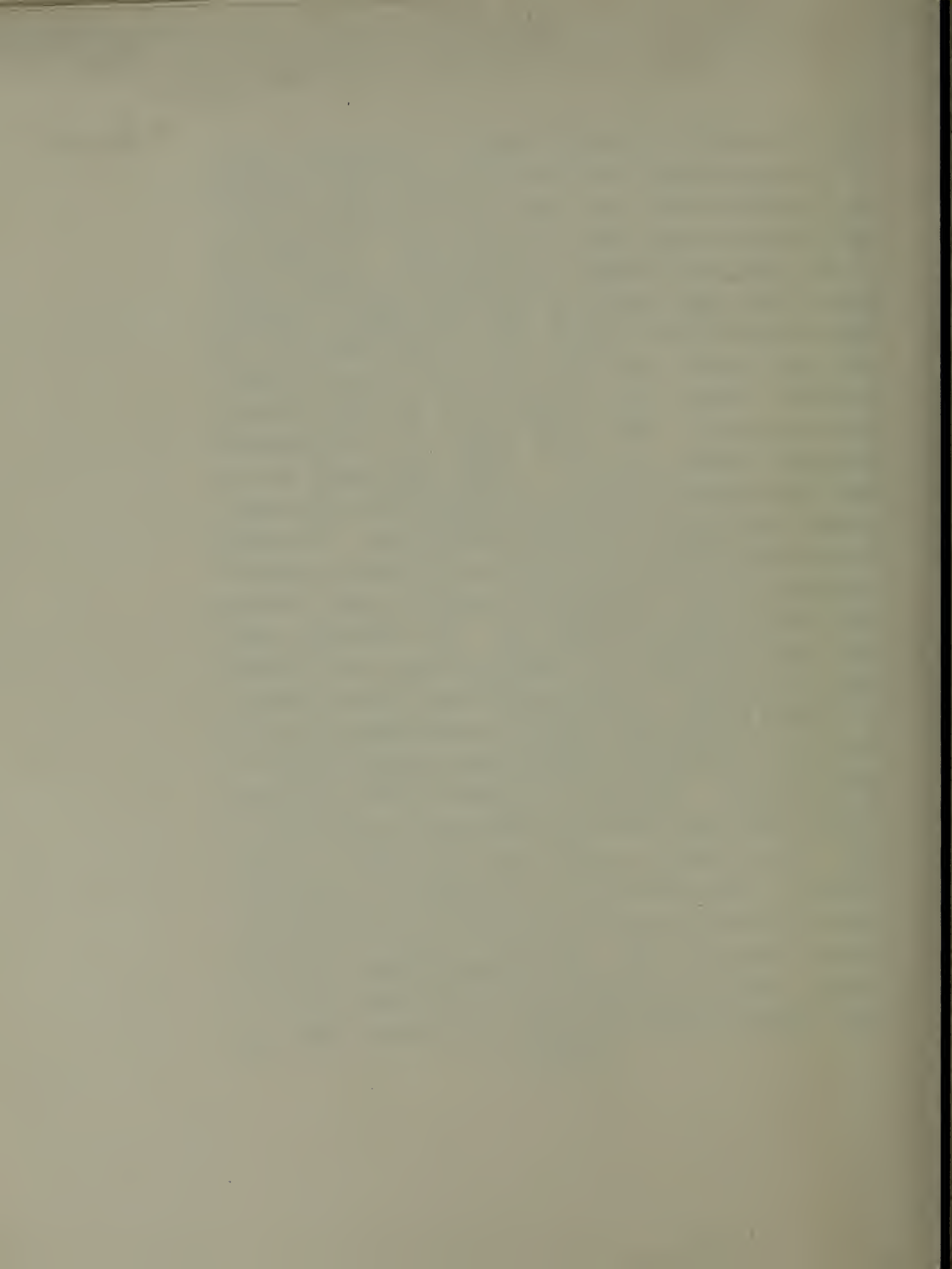
December 4, 1917.

"We have been working hard since our return, as we found thirteen boxes or big cases to be opened and distributed. Louise is the head of the men's department—all the men's clothes she tackles, also boots and shoes. We had about one hundred and fifty of the latter and more old clothes. We were swamped with them. Now things have been pretty well all given out and we have made many people happy. We have just some odds and ends left, some high-heeled slippers and ball shoes.

"We get very funny things. Some are almost impossible to place anywhere—the most hopeless go to the Sisters of the Poor, who can get a little something—material

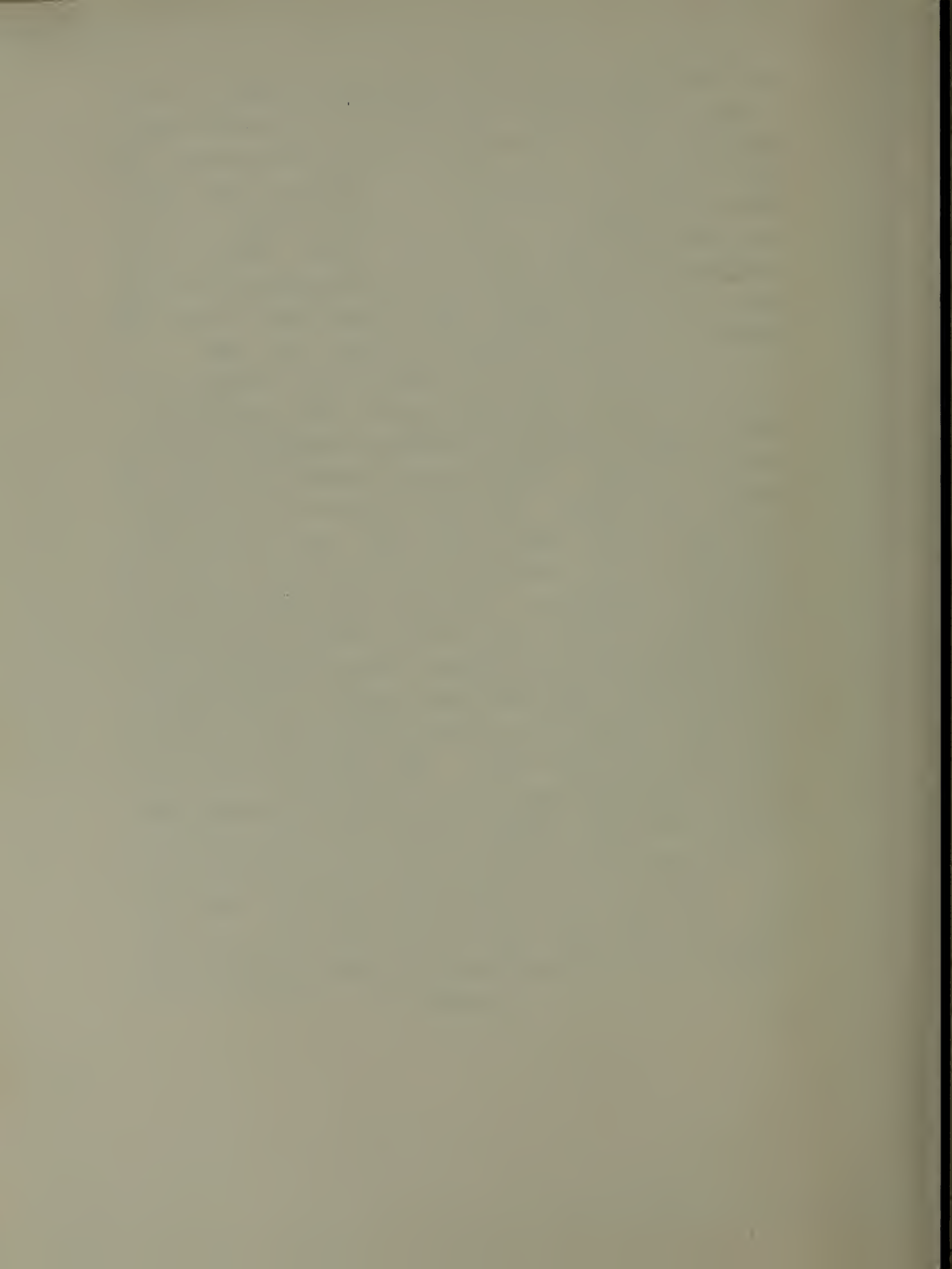


or wire out of a hopeless object. A smashed bonnet with a worm-eaten owl's head—the eyes just dangling on trembling wires—and once we had thirteen beaver hats for men—some were the crush kind. We gave up at the sight, but finally we thought the Sisters could make flower pot covers of them and then a brighter idea struck us and we gave them to the Sisters for the old men to wear, turn and turn about, to each others' funerals! Wasn't that a bright idea, and the old men were so proud." We have many of our American Sammies turning up now." Here the streets are so dark one is always falling over things left on the pavements, and many of our friends badly hurt. It is hard to get about in Paris—no busses or cars and no taxis or anything and the underground packed so that you feel like fainting when you get out. The Wachman girls had just left Rome for Palermo when the Germans began their drive. I am thankful that they are away—it is awful to have the Germans come down on you as they did in 1914, and I tremble when I think of what we went through. Pray hard for Italy and that misguided Russia, that poor sick bear, with just as much sense as one. Pray that we won't have too hard a winter. We have a little coal, but no coal card yet. One has to burn up all one has before they give you a card and then can we find any coal? Agonizing question! And the bread! From war bread, good Lord deliver us!! It gets a black wreath of fog all over it after a few days



and it has green and yellow splotches of mold!!! Ugh! —one of our friends is getting fat on 'graisse alimentaire' and horse. The restaurant food was so bad and this is good in comparison, so she says, poor thing. We burn candles, or 'rates des caves' or go to bed in the dark, according to our pocket books. We go to bed with the chickens, so as to save combustibles and keep warm 'a la polar bears,' and it has been a very cold winter for Paris and began in October, too, alas! * *

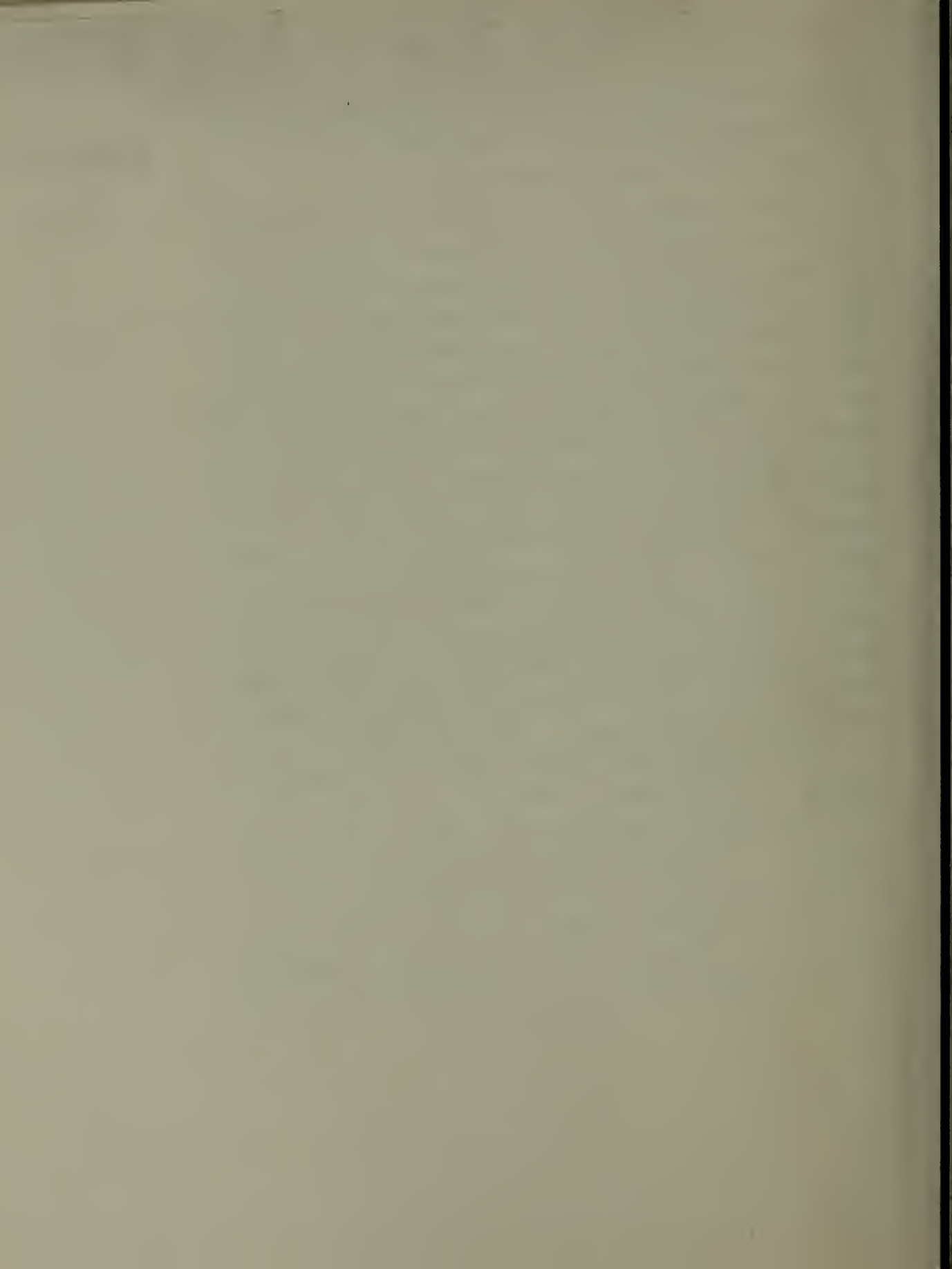
* I stopped my letter to welcome two soldiers; one reformed and the other his brother 'En permission'—both young men and their families are refugées from the north of France. There are five brothers and the old mother and father. The five brothers are all soldiers and didn't know where each other was or what had happened to the parents who had been carried off prisoners to Germany. Now the old people have been sent back to France, where they luckily found the son who was reformed at S. Sulpice, where I first knew him. He had frozen feet and three wounds. The brothers have been traced too, and they come back to the old folks when they get leave. The reformed Henri, the one who came just now, is a very handsome young man, married and with a child, but they are still somewhere in the hands of the Germans, and the poor fellow is so sad. They are all so poor, sick and sad. We have fifty cases like this, worse and more of it, and our feelings are so harrowed we can hardly stand it, so we



are glad to be able to help a little, but work as we will, it only seems a drop in the ocean of woe."

From a letter dated November 19, 1918.

"Victory, victory!!! We are all so happy over here. Paris is one bloom of flags—the cannon boomed and the bells rang, just as they used to do when the Goths came, but now we know they will never come again. It seems all a miracle to have the Germans rolled back so quickly, and I rejoice that our boys will not have to spend a winter in the trenches, where their feet would fall off with ice and frost. I can't believe it is true that Peace has come. Even the streets are lighted at night; they have taken off the blue covering of the lamps and I feel so exposed. I fear 'they' will come again and that I must rush to cover. I know you are rejoicing too, and that the bells are ringing la-bas as well as all around the world. But it will take a long time to clear up and get things going and get more food and coal, which is very scarce here and will be worse as all those poor starved prisoners are coming back. They say they are on all the roads leading into France, starved and haggard, begging a bit of bread. Many die en route. They look like ancient mummies—so yellow and so half decayed!!! The poor refugées are pouring in and those who were carried off in slavery by the Boche. . . . But the sun is shining bright and warm and the nightmare is over. It is wonderful how the weather changed with the ceasing of the cannon, perhaps that is not the

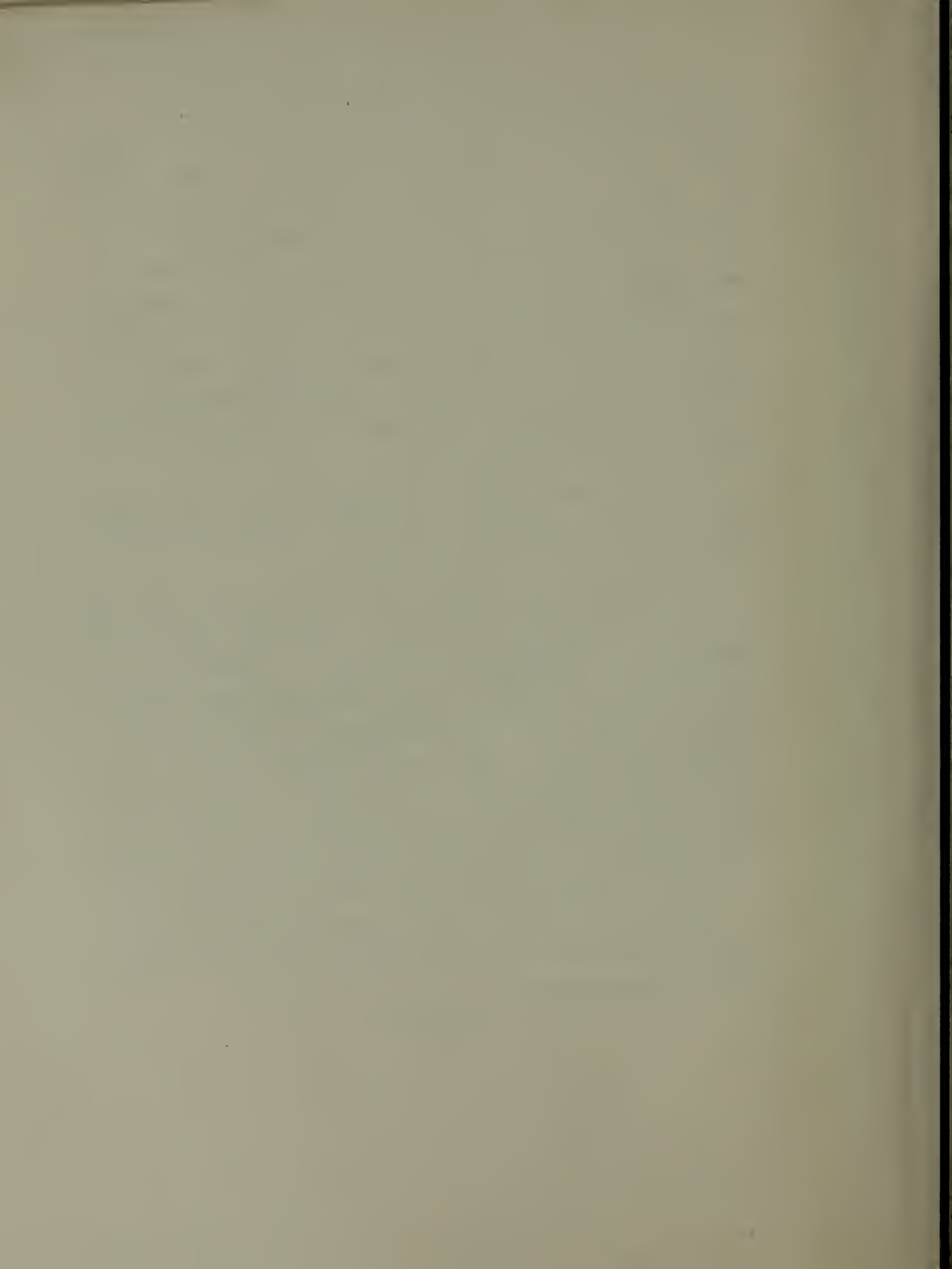


reason, but the weather has been so beautiful and every one is out, singing on the place de l'Opéra. I made my début there too, singing with a million others—while the avions whirled and shimmered over our heads. Sunday I went to see a procession to celebrate the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. There was such a crowd of Parisiennes, Tommies, Sammies, Poilus, etc., hanging from every tree, like grapes on the arbor. There was such a crowd that the procession couldn't pass!!! I thought next time the Boches come the Parisiennes must go out to meet them and 'they will *not* pass'—'on ne passera pas'—as they say here.

"We are pretty well, but mighty tired. We staid five months in Brittany, where we worked like galley slaves and now we are at it again here.

"The grippe was terrible there and was very bad here, but, thank God, it is better. The good, bright cold weather had something to do with it. We see many of our Sammies and there are two thousand just opposite us on our right—it is an Ambulance in the Lycée Montaigne—they are as thick as the fallen leaves in the Luxembourg Garden and just the color; most of them were gassed and so they are out all day in the open air, bless them!!! I wish they could go home—it is lonely for them hanging around here, with nothing to do."

"These were the first days of the World War and now, that the Armistice has been signed, let us have peace, but we cannot forget.

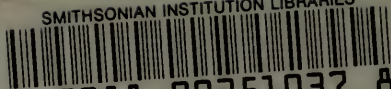


“Even if we cannot forget we must remember the whole world is striving for peace and yet it seems farther away than ever. Peace, what a wonderful word it is and what a wealth of meaning it has, but why do not the nations realize that in order to have world-peace, we must first have peace in all hearts and make that ever-new, though old, yet joyful refrain, ‘Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men,’ come true in this war-worried world of ours.”

(Thanks to *La Revue de France*, from an article by Raymond Recouly, and *The Figaro*.)



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